DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 026 943 HE 000 239

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Maintaining Institutional Identity and Autonomy in Coordinated Systems.

California Univ., Berkeley. Center for Research and Development in Higher Education.; Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, Boulder, Colo.

Pub Date Nov 66

Note-14p.; Paper presented at 8th Annual College Self-Study Institute, University of California, Berkeley, July 11-14, 1966, "Campus and Capitol."

EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.80

Descriptors-*Academic Freedom, College Environment, *Coordination, Educational Responsibility, *Higher Education, *State Programs, Student Attitudes, Teacher Attitudes

Identifiers-*California Master Plan for Higher Education

Institutional autonomy is a relative concept affected both by external constraints and by the attitudes and experience of those within the institution. The identity of an institution is the image established by the dynamics of its constituents and the freedom they exercise in establishing this identity determines its autonomy. In California, external constraints are produced by the interaction of the university system with the development of the Master Plan for Higher Education and the Coordinating Council for Higher Education. Accrediting agencies, professional societies, local, state and federal agencies account for other constraints. Sources of influence within the system are the regents, offices of presidents and vice presidents and university-wide committees. Within the institution, faculty, staff and student views shape the development and maintenance of institutional autonomy. The faculty tends to equate institutional autonomy with personal autonomy and the staff tends to view the university as a public trust requiring accountability to all it serves or is served by. Students, on the other hand, are vitally concerned about ends or results presumably provided by freedom of action. Students, faculty and staff not the administration, are the primary resources for achieving and preserving institutional identity and autonomy. An annotated bibliography is included. (JS)

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Maintaining Institutional Identity and Autonomy in Coordinated Systems

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No thoughtful reading or discussion about the nature and function of a university will produce information supporting the view that these agencies of higher education are truly autonomous. Whether it be an individual entity or a member of a system, coordinated or otherwise, a university is a product of society and is subject to a variety of constraints, according to the particular forces which established it and the environment in which it functions.

Institutional Autonomy: A Relative Concept

Institutional autonomy, therefore, is a relative concept. It is affected not only by external constraints but also by the attitudes and experience of those within the institution who are concerned about the state of its autonomy, be they students, faculty, staff, administrators, regents, alumni, etc. Briefly stated, the identity of an institution is the image established by the idiosyncrasies and dynamics of these constituents. The freedom they may exercise in establishing this identity determines its autonomy.

In response to the invitation to discuss institutional identity and autonomy in coordinated systems and, hopefully, to add to the pool of information from which concepts can be developed concerning the organization and operation of a university, I shall identify, first, conditions and relationships in the system which

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are likely to affect the institution's freedom in establishing its identity. Consideration will be given to the stipulations and characteristics of the system, which, according to the goals and objectives of the institution, may be considered support for, or constraints to, institutional autonomy.

Recognizing that autonomy is a condition which may differ in character, depending upon the constituents within the institution making the judgment, faculty, administration, and student views of institutional identity and autonomy will then be discussed. With this information as background, a concluding effort will be made to identify and define those conditions or relationships within the enterprise which assure its autonomy and identity, regardless of the constituent making the appraisal.

In general, I shall be discussing the freedom and constraints experienced by faculty, administration, and students in developing and operating one campus in a nine-campus system in which ultimate authority and responsibility for the system rest in a Board of Regents. Specifically, I shall draw from my experience in planning, developing, and operating the Irvine campus of the University of California, which I have had the opportunity to serve as chief administrative officer since its inception.

In the university system of which the Irvine campus is a part, there are a number of organizational entities whose goals and responsibilities have significant impact upon the operation of the campus. In addition, there are organizations external to the system which affect its function. Some of the responsibilities and activities of these agencies within, and external to, the system will be described, so that fuller appreciation may be had of the reservoir of forces that act to influence the identity and autonomy of the institution.

From Without: Impact of the Master Plan

The Master Plan for Higher Education in California seeks to assure appropriate educational opportunities to all qualified students at reasonable costs to the people of the state and to guarantee essential expansion, without wasteful duplication, through the coordination of the three public sectors of higher education—junior colleges, state colleges, and the state-wide university system. The University of California, as a participant in the development of

the master plan, continues to meet its traditional obligations for university-level instruction and professional training, research, and public service. According to the provisions of the Donahoe Act of 1960, by which the state legislature of California implemented the Master Plan for Higher Education in California, the University of California (1) adopted admission standards in 1962 under which the top 12½ percent of California high school graduates are eligible for admission, (2) embarked upon a program of adjusting enrollments by 1970 to a 60/40 ratio of upper division and graduate students to lower division students, (3) agreed not to introduce lower division instruction at new campuses until surrounding communities have developed junior college facilities to an adequate level, (4) improved its utilization of classrooms and laboratories to approach standards set forth by the master plan, and (5) developed a "Plan of Growth" which would enable the university to increase its present enrollment of approximately 80,000 students to 120,000 by 1975 and 215,000 by the year 2000.

While fulfilling these requirements of the master plan, which have a pronounced influence on institutional identity and autonomy, the university also has been a conscientious and productive participant in the affairs of the Coordinating Council for Higher Education. This is an advisory body to the boards of the public institutions of higher education, established by the Master Plan for Higher Education in California, which (1) reviews the annual budgets and capital outlay requests of the University of California and state college systems and presents to the governor comments on the general level of support sought; (2) interprets functional differentiation among the junior college, state college, and university systems; and (3) develops plans for orderly growth and the need for, and location of, new facilities.

In addition to the impact upon campus identity and autonomy which is produced by the interaction of the university system with other segments of higher education in California, constraints are generated external to the institution and the system by accrediting organizations and professional societies and a variety of local, state, and federal agencies.

Within the university system, institutional identity and autonomy are influenced by the Board of Regents' policy, by policies and procedures, rules and regulations developed by the offices of the

president and the vice-presidents, by numerous university-wide committees of faculty, staff, and students that deal with curricular and extracurricular, business and personnel affairs, and by the students, faculty, and staff of the institution itself.

From Within: Impact of Personal Viewpoints

With minor exceptions, no particular effort has been made in the foregoing commentary to characterize the effects of the system on the identity and autonomy of the institution as constraints or as opportunities. Such classification is dependent upon the goals and objectives of the institution and the constituency within the institution making the appraisal, whether they are faculty members, administrators, or students. Assuming that goals and objectives can be defined, I should like now to discuss the views these constituents hold on the development and maintenance of institutional identity and autonomy.

The Faculty: Search for Personal Freedom

An examination of faculty views reveals generally an initial tendency to equate institutional autonomy with personal autonomy. There is a desire to be free of all possible constraints in research, writing, teaching, and service, except those which might be imposed by whatever small group of professional or academic validators faculty members deem necessary and proper to pay attention to. Autonomy is freedom from "busy work" which intrudes upon research time, freedom to teach as though there were no other courses and no "red tape," and freedom to express social and political views, uninhibited by responsibilities of university citizenship.

Responses to specific inquiry concerning views about institutional autonomy within the university system depended on roles of the faculty, perceptions of the institution and system they share or do not share, and value-attitudes which might shape their responses to the environment. The obvious implication is that faculties generally do not exhibit homogeneous reactions to organizational factors.

Perhaps the prime factor in determining the reactivity of the faculty to the question of institutional autonomy is the level of confidence they have in the administration. When confidence is firm, the faculty who do not have administrative responsibility

develop the following spectrum of reactions to the idea of greater autonomy or decentralization of authority in the system:

1. Campus autonomy will not matter much, one way or the other.
2. "Red tape" (many forms and many copies) can, or will be, reduced.
3. Decentralization will mean home rule on important policy matters.
4. Opportunity for educational innovation will be enhanced.

Among faculty who administer (deans, department chairmen, etc.), greater freedom from capricious veto on personnel recommendations is expected, as is greater control over budget and greater freedom to experiment.

A certain ambivalence is evident in the faculty comments about institutional autonomy, for remarks concerning the desirability of greater freedom are accompanied by expressions of appreciation for the prestige and the political and moral strength attached to the university system as a whole.

Finally, those who see predominantly "good" in a centralized prestigious system are suspect of increasing autonomy, especially in the uncertain days of a campus's early development.

The Administrative Staff: Accountability, Not Autonomy

Turning from the faculty to views of administrative staff who are concerned primarily with the operation and fiscal affairs of the institution, the initial comments were related not to autonomy, but to accountability. As an institution in a publicly supported system of higher education, the campus is viewed as a public trust requiring accountability to all whom it serves or is served by. This is a fundamental constraint which the campus inherits as a member of this system. Since it is demonstrable that virtually every activity on a campus has academic implications, the public and its representatives must have a genuine understanding of the operation and mission of the institution and its need for freedom. To reduce the likelihood of outside interference, these institutions must avoid any practice which may give rise to the suspicion that management and fiscal affairs will not bear critical scrutiny.

In reviewing the activities of the Office of Business Affairs, which encompasses every dimension of campus life, it was possible

to draw a number of conclusions concerning the involvement of the campus in the university system which would ensure maximum freedom of operation. These are:

1. There should be a continuing effort to place authority for decision at the campus level.
2. The development of uniform policies and formulas as controlling devices in the system should be minimized.
3. Excessive concern should be avoided about duplication of effort and the centralizing of "housekeeping" activities which may interfere with efficient local management.
4. There is a stifling effect of system on institutional initiative and creativity. Autonomy is not the province of a single agency; it is the concern of many sub-units of the agency, as well as of those external to it.

The Students: A Means to Ends

The responses of students to queries about institutional autonomy were of an entirely different character from those of faculty and administrative staff. Little concern was voiced about the means or the machinery for achieving and maintaining autonomy. Instead, the students were vitally concerned about the ends, or the results, which freedom of action would presumably provide. They were preoccupied with the idea that they have opportunity "to leave their mark on the campus." They wanted access to the administration and sought assurance that the institution would afford them the opportunity to be involved in making decisions which would influence the character of the campus. While there was interest that their campus be free of pressures from other campuses of the university system in the planning and development of student organizations, programs, and activities, great appreciation and admiration were expressed for the excellent reputation which the system, as a whole, has achieved and for the opportunity to be identified with it. There was a genuine hope expressed that their institution would afford them the opportunity to excel, so that they might participate responsibly and productively in the university system's continuing quest for excellence. In short, the students were far more concerned about identity than they were about autonomy. But, buried in their comments, was the assumption that somehow and in some way they would be free to drive toward their goals.

Out of my discussion with faculty, students, and administrative staff, concerning institutional identity and autonomy, has come a number of ideas and concepts about the organization and operation of a university, which should obtain, if the climate of freedom in which higher education flourishes is to prevail.

Institutional Identity: A Must for Autonomy

In some ways, institutional identity is a prerequisite to institutional autonomy, for only as goals and objectives are defined can the constituents of the institution determine whether the conditions of the system in which they operate are constraints or opportunities. As circumstances permit better definition of the opportunities and constraints in the system, its members may well experience greater autonomy. They are able to enlarge the scope of their independence in constructive ways, for by invention they can push back the boundaries of constraint.

The more the individual understands the goals and objectives of the institution and his role within it, the more likely he is to accept stipulations and changes in it as conditions which may ultimately ensure him the freedom he desires. Willingness to accept constraints as a condition of achievement will be found more often when the goals and objectives of the individual or the institution are similar to those of the system.

From the point of view of higher education, the foregoing observations indicate that a new kind of organization is in the making, at least insofar as faculty involvement is concerned. No longer is it possible—if it ever was— for the faculty member to think of himself as a free agent, unencumbered by operational requirements and administrative constraints. The price of faculty freedom today is an increasing amount of faculty time spent in becoming knowledgeable about the goals, objectives, and operation of their institution and the particular role that they play in it. The faculty member will have to become more of an organizational man, since the resources he requires to support his teaching and research programs have to be generated from much more complex systems. He cannot shun involvement in the operation and administration of the institution. Faculty participation and leadership will be indispensable in the conduct of the institution's affairs and in the development of resources to support it.

Increasingly, faculty will have to take the initiative in obtaining outside validation for their needs and, in doing so, will be assuming greater responsibility for generating leadership within the institution.

The maintenance of institutional identity and autonomy is no longer the responsibility of the administration alone, trying desperately to preserve the myth that the university is a sanctum for a collection of unencumbered free intellectuals. Today the preservation of conditions which will encourage, rather than limit, intellectual freedom and institutional independence involves every individual in the institution. Knowledgeable about, and dedicated to, the goals and objectives of the institution, aware of their roles and their responsibility for developing leaders and providing leadership, prepared and expected to assist in the acquisition of adequate material support and in the development of public appreciation of the values of higher education, students, faculty, and staff are the primary resources for achieving and preserving institutional identity and autonomy.

See Section II in the back of this book
for annotated bibliography of related materials.

Maintaining Institutional Identity and Autonomy in Coordinated Systems

Institutional autonomy is a relative concept. It is affected not only by external constraints but also by the attitudes and experiences of those within the institution who are concerned about the state of its autonomy. To the students, faculty, staff, administrators, regents, alumni, etc. (briefly stated, the identity of an institution is the image established by the idiosyncrasies and dynamics of those constituents. The freedom they may exercise to establishing this identity determines its autonomy.

In California, external constraint, having an impact upon campus identity and autonomy, is produced by the interaction of the university system with the development of the Master Plan for Higher Education and the Coordinating Council for Higher Education. Other constraints upon the university system are generated by accrediting agencies, professional societies, and a variety of local, state, and federal agencies. Within the university system, the sources of influence on the regents, the offices of the president and vice-presidents, and university-wide committees.

Within the institution itself, the views held by faculty, staff, and students are of major importance in the development and maintenance of institutional identity and autonomy.

Faculty views reveal generally an initial tendency to equate institutional autonomy with personal autonomy. Autonomy is freedom from constraints except those deemed necessary and proper.

The initial comments of staff are not related to autonomy but to accountability. As an institution in a publicly-supported system of higher education, the campus is viewed as a public trust requiring accountability to all whom it serves or is served by.

The responses of students are of an entirely different character from those of the faculty and staff. The students are vitally concerned about the ends, or the results, which freedom of action presumably provides.

The maintenance of institutional identity and autonomy is no longer the responsibility of the administration alone, trying desperately to preserve the myth that the university is a sanctum for a collection of unencumbered free intellectuals. Students, faculty, and staff are the primary resources for achieving and preserving institutional identity and autonomy.

Section II

Maintaining Institutional Identity and Autonomy in Coordinated Systems

Axelrod, Joseph and others. *Autonomy and Interdependence: Emerging Systems in Higher Education.* Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1964. 89 pp.

This volume is comprised of five resource papers written as background for discussions at the Annual Meeting of the American Council on Education in 1964. The five topics deal in general with the conflicting concepts in higher education of "autonomy" and "interdependence." Topics covered include: "New Organizational Patterns in American Colleges and Universities"; "Consortia and Related Interinstitutional Arrangements in Higher Education"; "Interstate Cooperation and Coordination in Higher Education"; "National Organizations in Higher Education."

Blackwell, Thomas E. *College Law: A Guide for Administrators.* Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1961. 347 pp.

Although the book covers an extensive amount of material, chapters VII and VIII are of primary importance. Blackwell is able to put many of the questions such as "Is education a function of government?" and "Are some state universities constitutional independent corporations?" into a concise, logical perspective. His discussion of certain state officials' interference with the internal administration of institutions of higher education, i.e., state administration agencies, state auditors, and state treasurers, is very illuminating.

————. "Legislative Control of Tax Supported Universities," *College and University Business,* Vol. XXVI (September, 1956), pp. 34-6.

The author argues that the majority of state-supported colleges and universities are now considered to be public corporations created by the state legislatures and subject to their control.

Browne, Arthur D. "The Institution and the System: Autonomy and Coordination," *Long-Range Planning in Higher Education,* Owen A. Knorr, Ed. Boulder, Colo.: The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 1964. pp. 39-51.

The case of autonomy versus coordination as applied to long-range planning is presented. The evidence points to a split decision, with each a winner if it is willing to pay a price. But the cost of winning is high, for it involves restraint and sacrifice, which means the

subjugation of personal interests to the welfare of the total educational enterprise.

Brumbaugh, A. J. "Proper Relationships Between State Government and State-supported Higher Institutions," *Educational Record,* Vol. 42, No. 3 (July, 1961), pp. 173-178.

Forces encroaching on institutional autonomy are identified. The factors contributing to the trend toward external controls of state colleges and universities are discussed. The author offers five conclusions concerning the relationships between the state and its institutions of higher education.

————. *State-wide Planning and Coordination of Higher Education.* Atlanta, Georgia: Southern Regional Education Board, 1963. 45 pp.

This book represents a concise and short summary of the requirements for an effective state-wide planning and coordination agency. Several states are used as guidelines in describing the operation and functions of state planning boards. The author feels such an independent agency is needed in order to bring together the common objectives of both the citizens and the institutions of higher learning.

Chambers, M. M. *Freedom and Repression in Higher Education.* Bloomington, Indiana: The Bloomcraft Press, Inc., 1965. 126 pp.

In the author's words, he has "struggled to explain and present favorably the principle of individual freedom of choice and of institutional autonomy in higher education . . ." which to him are more important than centralized planning and administrative bureaucracy. Dr. Conant's book, *Shaping Educational Policy,* is heavily criticized on the grounds that Chambers feels diversity rather than unity ". . . is needed in a state's higher education policy, and at all costs our systems of higher education should steer away from any uniformity or regimentation of a bureaucratic nature."

————. *Voluntary State-wide Coordination in Public Higher Education.* Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1961. 80 pp.

The author analyzes systems of non-compulsory planning and administering of state higher education in the hands of a formal agency. He asks some pointed questions as to the real benefit such organizations actually provide. He feels that "neither at the state level nor the national level do Americans want a rigidly structured 'European ministry of education' type of control of public colleges and universities." He analyzes in separate chapters the systems of higher education in California, Colorado, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan.

The Committee on Government and Higher Education. *The Efficiency of Freedom.* Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Press, 1959. 44 pp.

This study, financed by the Fund for the Advancement of Education, has as its objectives: (1) to define the relationships that should properly exist between public officials and state institutions of higher education; (2) to identify the principal areas in which state control over higher education has appeared to exceed proper limits and thus to lead to unwarranted political or bureaucratic intrusion into educational policy or effective educational administration; and (3) to suggest basic remedial lines of action.

Evan, William M. "The Organization-Set: Toward a Theory of Interorganizational Relations," *Approaches to Organizational Development,* James D. Thompson, Ed. Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1966. pp. 173-91.

Social science research on organizations has been concerned principally with intraorganizational phenomena. The relative neglect of interorganizational relations is surprising in view of the fact that all formal organizations are embedded in an environment of other organizations as well as in a complex of norms, values, and collectivities of the society at large. The phenomena and problems of interorganizational relations are part of the general class of boundary-relations problems confronting all types of social systems, including formal organizations.

"Freedom Crusade of the University of Massachusetts," *Educational Record,* Vol. XXXVIII (April, 1957), pp. 100-111.

An account, through the use of documents and press clippings, of how the university regained control of its personal policies through a hard fought campaign for public support led by the president. Offers a good look at a case study on how university officials can maintain local autonomy and control of university policies.

Glenny, Lyman A. *Autonomy of Public Colleges.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959. 325 pp.

The author in this work presents a comprehensive description of the existing patterns of coordination in higher education within states until 1957. Through a process of extensive personal interviewing of governors, college presidents, legislators, and state and university administrative officers, the author is able to present a valuable picture of the various coordinating agencies and boards throughout the United States. The book therefore attempts to enable legislators and educators to have a better understanding of what type of coordinating relationship within their state can best achieve a higher quality of higher education while not sacrificing such concepts as autonomy and freedom.

———. "State Systems and Plans for Higher Education," *Emerging Patterns in American Higher Education,* Logan Wilson, Ed. Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1965. pp. 86-103.

"Diversity continues to be cherished and encouraged by all, but today

the unlimited freedom of a college or university to pursue a self-determined destiny is rapidly being curtailed among the public institutions and even has prospects of diminishing among the non-public ones. At the state level the new watchwords are cooperation and coordination, with institutional autonomy only within certain parameters. The classic condition of autonomy in higher education still prevails in only ten states. . . ."

Kerr, Clark. *The Uses of the University*: Godkin Lectures. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963. 140 pp.

This contribution to higher education, written by the president of the conglomerate University of California, contains material on the actual effect of massive subsidies and a university's subsequent position when federal aid is given to it in any form. Of special interest is chapter 2 entitled "Federal Grant Universities."

Litwak, Eugene and Lydia F. Hylton. "Interorganizational Analysis: A Hypothesis on Coordinating Agencies," *Administrative Science Quarterly,* Vol. 6 (March, 1962), pp. 395-426.

A theory of interorganizational coordination is presented based upon: (1) organizational interdependence, (2) level of organizational awareness, (3) standardization of organizational activities, and (4) number of organizations. The authors indicate a theory of limited conflict as opposed to traditional harmony theory.

Millet, J. D. "State Planning for Higher Education," *Educational Record,* Vol. 46, No. 3 (Summer, 1965), pp. 223-30.

The impression is conveyed that state planning for higher education is no bed of roses. It is not a field for the timorous, the anxious, the sensitive. But it is a field where much can be accomplished if all involved in public higher education will work together with intelligence, good will, and a sense of compromise. The alternative is a return to a jungle political warfare in which reason is likely to play a small role and naked power will decide the issues.

Perkins, James A. "The New Conditions of Autonomy," *Emerging Patterns in American Higher Education,* Logan Wilson, Ed. Washington, D. C.: The American Council on Education, 1965. pp. 8-17.

Within the context of academic freedom and university autonomy, the author discusses the relationship between modern government, industry, and education and the combinations of interests. Specifically covered are: Growth and Specialization; Decentralization and Specialization; Faculty and Administration; State, Regional, and National Organizations; International Agencies; and The Hierarchy of Structures. He concludes that a large degree of autonomy is necessary if the university is to properly perform its function and maintain academic freedom and that this autonomy will depend primarily upon the statesmanship abilities of university administrators.

The University of the State of New York, State Education Department. *The Regents' State-wide Plan for the Expansion and Development of Higher Education, 1964*. Albany, N. Y.: The University of the State of New York Press, April, 1965. 131 pp.

Every four years the State Board of Regents must submit a comprehensive plan for the orderly development of higher education. This is their first plan. The report is an extensive document covering every aspect of education and the peculiar organization and relationship of New York public and private schools. Report deals at length with the state needs to both the state and the society. Part IV deals with the institution plans and the means of the master plan to achieve identity, unity, and excellence throughout the university.

Wilson, Logan, Ed. *Emerging Patterns in American Higher Education.* A collection of essays. Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1965. 292 pp.

This volume of essays is contributed by the nation's leading educators and scholars; it is a comprehensive overview of American higher education today. Directed primarily at organization and direction, it covers: the changing environment of higher education; institutional modifications; the emergence of state systems; voluntary arrangements; interinstitutional and interstate agreements; unified approaches to national problems; national associations in higher education; and national policy for higher education: problems and prospects. Primary emphasis is toward the emergence of a stronger national higher educational policy.

————. *Diversity and Divisiveness in Higher Education.* Unpublished speech delivered to the American Association of Junior Colleges, March 1, 1966.

"Our system of higher education was organized largely in discrete units, with local boards, administrators, and faculties exercising considerable autonomy in the determination of their own means and ends. But the growing importance, expense, and interdependence of higher education institutions are forces exerting heavy pressures to change all this. . . ."

————. "Myths and Realities of Institutional Independence," *Emerging Patterns in American Higher Education,* Logan Wilson, Ed. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1965, pp. 18-28.

In this article the author addresses himself to the problem of what is a "proper" or "improper" constraint on an institution's independence. By tracing past traditions of institutional autonomy and present influences on this autonomy the author suggests that we can no longer reject the idea that our colleges and universities operate in a highly interdependent era which is becoming more "politicized" every year. In conclusion Wilson feels university organization and administration has lacked the concentrated reorganization and change which industry and government have long been experiencing.

Wooden, William P. "State Universities—Legislative Control of a Constitutional Corporation," *Michigan Law Review*, Vol. 55, No. 5 (March, 1957), pp. 728-730.

Article reviews the decision of the Utah Supreme Court on the issue of whether or not a university corporation is free from any control by the state. The court found that such a corporation, i.e., Michigan, California, and Colorado, is merely an independent province and, as such, legislative enactments will prevail over the rules and regulations made by the university where the matter in question is not an exclusively university affair. . . . Of special interest with regard to the influence of the state government to the campus is the legislative control of the university when "conditions are attached to university appropriations."